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DEAD VIOLETS

Pete Dederick

I stared at the sun and at autumn's dead violets,
saw infamy glare out of hideous sockets,
as night's winds blew colder, sun's circles sunk lower.
Dead was a woman, her offerings swallowed
by a mouth of fertile earth, now frozen, shut barren,
grainy photos of a meadow of dresses, pearlish white,
petals dancing desecration on the eve of Lent's fast.

Sickened I felt as the sun hung like mustard,
ugly and stained like her clutched rosaries,
the lid sealed on miracles, gasped broken English
misunderstood as her dead birds of prophecy,
her assertions of kitchens through worn-out old hands,
the domains of a widow of husband and land.

When daylight's lone star plunged I fell on my bed.
I thought of when I needed her when I was young;
secluded in darkness, I saw circles on the ceiling
sink lower and lower 'til I felt a frail hug.